

The Kids Love Bikes Program



What we do

We provide certified bike instructors to teach our immersive and dynamic youth bike education program that focuses on bicycle handling, maintenance, and safety. Through our program, not only do we give kids the opportunity to develop their physical and health literacy, but also learn how to challenge themselves, set goals, and take responsibility and pride in achieving it.

Our full program consists of 6 - 1.5 hour long classes, ending with a group bike ride and celebration. Bike Walk Knoxville instructors and volunteers work to provide individual coaching to ensure these skills are learned correctly and consistently practiced. Once the child has completed all sessions and demonstrated mastery of the program's fundamental bike skills, they will have officially earned their individually fitted bike and are able to take it home. We work with great organizations including Kickstand, DreamBikes, Bike Elf, and the Epilepsy Foundation to provide quality, safe bikes and helmets. We also provide 1-hour education classes focusing on basic bike and pedestrian education and safety, which allows us to reach more kids. Our goal is to teach these shortened classes across the community, so that as many kids as possible learn the basic fundamentals of bike and pedestrian safety.

What we teach...

Handling, because 80% of bike accidents involve only a bicycle. If the child is in control of their bike, they have the power to stay out of harm's way and signal to drivers that they are confident and competent cyclists.

Maintenance, because bicycles should last longer than the air in their tires. A huge barrier to consistent cycling is fear of becoming stranded due to a mechanical issue or once a mechanical issue arises, the bike becomes no more than garage clutter or a lawn decoration.

Safety, because you can't follow rules you don't know. For most people, the only bike safety education they receive is informal (if at all) from parents or peers. Road sign and rules literacy is a fundamental aspect of making safe decisions and forming good habits while riding a bike.

Why we do it

Bike Walk Knoxville was founded in 2012, to increase the number of people walking and biking, as well as improve policies relating to the experiences of pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities in Knoxville. Our advocacy efforts not only provide safer, active transportation options for residents, but also increase the likelihood of incorporating more walking and biking into daily routines which can help residents, young and old, enjoy better health. By exercising more, people reduce their risk of becoming obese with associated secondary chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders.

Beginning in April of 2018, Bike Walk Knoxville launched the Kids Love Bikes program in order to provide a program that brought bike education and bike giveaways together, striving not only to improve bike safety outcomes for Knoxville youth, but to also show how biking can be a fun way to be active and healthy throughout their lives.

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What we've accomplished so far

Since launching in 2018, we have provided this program to 8 different organizations and have future programs planned with even more. Through these partnerships, we've gifted bikes to 50 kids (and counting) and educated over 400 kids. Thereafter, we have seen firsthand how our program can help kids bike safely and get active! When kids participate in our program, they are not just learning bike education that can help keep them safe, but are also expanding their curiosity and capabilities by developing technical and physical skills. Ultimately, our curriculum prepares kids to bike safely and get active while using the joy of biking to teach/reinforce other important life skills. Our goal is to get more kids riding bikes safely!

How we do it

While there is a substantial cost to provide a high quality program, we work tirelessly to secure grants and partner with community organizations so we can offer the benefits of our curriculum to as many with demonstrated need as possible. To do this, we rely on our partners to think creatively and utilize the unique resources and connections they may possess in order to continue providing this program at no cost to participants. While our arrangement with every organization may be slightly different, a full program earn a bike class costs approximately \$180/child which includes a refurbished bike and new helmet.

We have designed a flexible, yet comprehensive bike education program that can be adapted to the unique circumstances and goals of our partner organizations. From using the program to incentivize or recognize achievement, to addressing specific bike education needs, with our staffs working together, we can use our engaging and effective programming to enhance your population's personal development and help create a more active culture at your organization.

How to get started

Reach out to Lindsey Kimble, lindseykimble@bikewalktn.org to find out more about how this program could work at your organization!